

Asylum Capacity Support Group: Dialogue Platform

In implementing its aim to ensure that asylum capacity support is provided in a consistent and the most impactful manner, the Asylum Capacity Support Group (ACSG) has focused on matching State requests for support with corresponding offers from States or other stakeholders since its launch in 2019. Further, the ACSG has facilitated the exchange of knowledge and expertise on asylum issues by providing information as well as sharing tools and good practices about asylum capacity development projects on the [ACSG portal](#) since 2021.

Starting in 2023, the ACSG will establish a platform for dialogue to advance the implementation of the recommendations from the [ACSG Stocktaking](#), the [EXCOM Side Event](#) and the [Asylum Capacity Development Evaluation of UNHCR's support for Strengthening National Asylum Systems](#). The Dialogue Platform will consist of periodic global meetings as well as activities organized around different workstreams. The Dialogue Platform will enhance the achievement of the ACSG's objectives of providing asylum capacity support and knowledge sharing by facilitating relationship-building between States and reinforcing linkages with key stakeholders. This strategic convener role of the ACSG will be particularly important in the lead up to the 2023 Global Refugee Forum (GRF). The four key workstreams that will make up the initial focus of the dialogue platform will be as follows:

1. Advance engagement in asylum capacity support linked to the ACSG through diversifying the ways of “matching” and highlighting matches already undertaken.
2. Mobilize asylum capacity pledges and prepare for and follow up on the 2023 GRF, including through engagement in regional fora and events.
3. Enhance the sharing of technical expertise on asylum strengthening through thematic events.
4. Contribute to the development and implementation of the strategy and guidance on UNHCR's national asylum capacity development.

Workstream One - Advance engagement in asylum capacity support

This workstream focusses on the implementation of current pledges and matching support needs with offers. From the pledges formally made, there are more requests for capacity support than offers of support available. The ACSG will address these unmet needs and increase engagement in asylum capacity support by diversifying ways of matching through the integration of capacity support offers without the requirement of a formal pledge, encouraging stakeholders to build on pre-existing support relationships (whether bilateral or through the ACSG) and building linkages with other initiatives.

Workstream Two - Mobilize asylum capacity pledges, prepare for and follow up on the 2023 GRF

As a special initiative launched by the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), the ACSG will advance the objectives of the GCR at the 2023 GRF. The second workstream will ensure a high-quality approach to pledge development and comprehensive responses to asylum capacity needs through support on pledge formulation and prioritization, encouraging joint and pre-matched pledges or initiatives, and providing good practice examples of asylum capacity support. Stakeholders engaged in this workstream will be encouraged to contribute to planning for the GRF and supporting the development of pledges. The

workstream will equally ensure linkages between regional fora or events and the ACSG to ensure maximum impact.

Workstream Three - Enhance the sharing of technical expertise

Exchange of knowledge and expertise has been a core activity of the ACSG since its inception. Such exchange has been implemented by providing information as well as sharing tools and good practices about asylum capacity development projects on the [ACSG portal](#). Under this third workstream, the ACSG will upscale the sharing of knowledge by convening technical dialogues or roundtables of key stakeholders which focus on asylum capacity strengthening issues linked to specific thematic or institutional aspects of asylum systems. The dialogues will provide a global space for interested stakeholders to discuss topics which are challenging to asylum systems globally, including about thematic and geographic situations. In identifying topics, the dialogues will focus on issues which provide challenges across regions in order to avoid duplication with existing regional forums.

Workstream Four – Asylum capacity development strategy and guidance

An evaluation of UNHCR's work on asylum capacity development was published in February 2022 and called on UNHCR to develop a more strategic and effective approach to supporting national asylum systems through improved guidance, tools, training and partnerships. UNHCR has welcomed the conclusions of this evaluation as an opportunity to strengthen its work in this critical area. In response to the evaluation's recommendations, UNHCR will develop a five-year global strategy on national asylum systems capacity development. UNHCR will seek the contribution of key stakeholders through the ACSG in the development and implementation of this strategy, as well as related initiatives.

Stakeholders

The first global meeting of the Dialogue Platform will focus on bringing together asylum authorities, regional organizations active in asylum capacity development, key civil society organizations and UNHCR. Other stakeholders will be engaged progressively in further global meetings or meetings linked to relevant workstreams.

States are responsible for their asylum systems, they can call on the support of the ACSG, and have abundant technical expertise on asylum and asylum systems. Engagement of States in the platform will be mostly at a technical asylum level, being asylum institutions or refugee management organizations. The permanent missions in Geneva will be engaged mainly in a liaison function.

Other stakeholders engaged in the platform will be regional organizations active in asylum capacity. Regional organizations and platforms have progressively taken a more important role in ensuring asylum capacity support is provided in a consistent and most impactful manner. In light of these developments, it is crucial to engage these organizations to ensure complementarity between regional initiatives and the work of the ACSG.

There are a range of other actors that have expertise in asylum capacity development, including civil society, academia, professional organizations, private sector, and users of asylum systems. The expertise of such stakeholders engaged in different aspects of the asylum system or capacity development of public sector institutions will progressively be sought to provide contributions into the global meetings or relevant workstreams after the initial meetings.



Organization and Format

The Dialogue Platform will consist of global meetings and other activities aimed at advancing the workstreams. The first global meeting will be convened by UNHCR, while future meetings as well as specific workstream activities may be co-convened by UNHCR and one or more ACSG stakeholders.

The global meetings will be held twice annually at a global level to provide updates and space for contributions and coordination of key actions and activities relating to all workstreams. The ACSG Dialogue Platform will not duplicate existing regional networks or platforms. Where such networks or platforms address and advance the same objectives of the ACSG, efforts will be made to make linkages to the dialogue platform in a mutually reinforcing manner.

As the implementation of the workstreams will require more detailed discussions and coordination with key stakeholders, States will have the opportunity to indicate interest in engaging in one or more of the workstreams at the first global meetings, after which smaller, more focused meetings will be held with interested stakeholders. The global meeting will be convened virtually. Virtual sessions will be repeated twice to cover all time zones. Translation will be provided between English, French and Spanish.

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